

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01
AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
/081 W

-----039782 080456Z /17/21

O P 070630Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7846
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 3635

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, PINT, AF, US
SUBJECT: FIRST MEETING WITH NEW AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER

1. AT 9 A.M., MAY 7, I PAID MY FIRST CALL ON THE NEW AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER, HAFIZULLAH AMIN, IN HIS OFFICE AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. WELL-ARMED TROOPS WERE WELL IN EVIDENCE, BOTH AT THE ENTRANCE AND IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE MINISTRY BUILDING. THERE ARE ALSO MANY BORKEN WINDOWS, PARTICULARLY ON THE UPPER STORIES.

2. AMIN RECEIVED ME ALONE. HE IS A SOFT-SPOKEN MAN, SLIGHTLY GREYING, AND WAS WARM AND FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT OUR CONVERSATION. HIS ENGLISH IS GOOD, BUT VERY RUSTY, HAVING BEEN ACQUIRED SOME 20 YEARS AGO AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. AMIN WAS PARTICULARLY PROUD OF HIS ROLE IN THE REVOLTUION. APPARENTLY DAOUD DID NOT ARREST HIM UNTIL THE MORNING OF APRIL 26, HAVING ARRESTED TARAKI AND OTHERS T U PREVIOUS EVENING. AMIN CLAIMED THAT THIS EXTRA
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TIME GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO ARRANGE THE MILITARY PART OF THE REVOLUTION. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, HE SAID THE ARRESTS PRECIPITATED THE MILITARY ACTION.

3. AS I HAD DONE WITH TARAKI THE PREVIOUS EVENING, I EXPLAINED OUR RECOGNITION POLICY AND OUR DESIRE TO HAVE CLOSE WORKING RELATIONS WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT. I ADDED THAT I HOPED THE

NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD SOON REAFFIRM EXISTING TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS, AND ASKED WHETHER IT CONTEMPLATED MAKING A FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT. AMIN SAID THAT PRESIDENT TARAKI WOULD PROBABLY DELIVER A SPEECH TO THE NATION TOMORROW, MAY 8, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A FOREIGN POLICY SECTION.

4. I THEN BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED THE "THREE PILLARS" OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD AFGHANISTAN: OUR DESIRE TO HELP MAINTAIN AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE; OUR EFFORTS TO HELP AFGHANISTAN'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; AND OUR DESIRE TO SEE PEACE AND STABILITY IN THIS REGION.

5. AMIN DID NOT RESPOND IMMEDIATELY TO THIS PART OF MY PRESENTATION BUT, AT THE END OF OUR CONVERSATION GAVE A FORCEFUL EXPLANATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY. HE SAID THAT AFGHANISTAN WANTS TO MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE AND ITS NONALIGNMENT. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY NOTED SUSPICIONS BEING VOICED ABROAD ABOUT ITS INTENTIONS IN THESE REGARDS. HE HOPED THESE SUSPICIONS WOULD NOT LEAD TO THE KIND OF ACTIVITY, PARTICULARLY BY THE PAKISTANIS AND THE IRANIANS, WHICH WOULD FORCE AFGHANISTAN TO MOVE AWAY FROM A STRICTLY NONALIGNED POLICY. HE ASKED ME A COUPLE OF TIMES IF I UNDERSTOOD WHAT HE WAS SAYING, WHICH , OF COURSE, I DID.

6. AMIN THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE PRINCIPAL AIM OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS TO PROVIDE "BREAD, CLOTHING, AND SHELTER" FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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AFGHAN PEOPLE. HE SAID THIS IS SUCH A MAJOR TASK THAT AFGHANISTAN CANNOT AFFORD TO HAVE ANYTHING BUT PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION. HE ALSO SAID THAT AFGHANISTAN WANTS TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FROM ANY AND EVERY SOURCE.

7. I GAVE AMIN BRIEF SUMMARIES OF OUR CURRENT AID, PEACE CORPS, ICA, IMET, AND DEA PROGRAMS, AND ALSO A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CURRENT PRIVATE AMERICAN INVESTMENT AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN AFGHANISTAN. HE COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD QUICKLY REVIEW THESE PAPERS AND LET ME KNOW IF THERE WERE ANY PROBLEMS. IN THE MEANTIME, HE SAID, WE SHOULD CARRY ON BUSINESS AS USUAL.

8. I ASKED AMIN ABOUT THE FORTHCOMING NONALIGNED COORDINATING BUREAU (NACB) AND SPECIAL UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SSOD) MEETINGS. HE SAID HE EXPECTED A DECISION WOULD BE MADE WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS AS TO AFGHAN REPRESENTATION AT THESE TWO MEETINGS. HE SAID THE NACB MEETING WOULD BE IN HAVANA IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE SSOD, BUT HE WAS NOT CERTAIN HE WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTEND. HE HOPED HE WOULD ATTEND THE SSOD FOR, AMONG OTHER REASONS, HE WOULD LIKE TO RENEW HIS ASSOCIATIONS WITH NEW YORK.

9. COMMENT: LIKE TARAKI, AMIN APPEARS TO BE A HARD-HEADED,
DIRECT MAN. BUT HE APPEARS MORE OF A MAN OF ACTION THAN HIS
INTELLECTUALLY INCLINED CHIEF, AND IS ALSO PHYSICALLY MORE ROBUST.
IN ADDITION TO BEING FOREIGN MINISTER, HE IS A DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.
MY GUESS IS THAT HE WILL TURN OUT TO BE ONE OF THE KEY CIVILIAN
FIGURES IN THE NEW REGIME.
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